Isaac Newton Academy Literacy for Learning Policy

At Isaac Newton Academy our aim is to equip every student with the knowledge, learning power and character necessary for success at university and beyond. Successful students express their knowledge and learning in a variety of clear and effective ways to fit the demands of the situation and of society. Our mission is to support students to develop the literacy and communication skills they will need to thrive in all aspects of life at the Academy, at university and in their future lives.

We are committed to accelerating progress in literacy for all students and especially those working below the levels expected for their ages. All staff are responsible for supporting students in developing their language skills, all staff are teachers of reading and every teacher is responsible for developing students' literacy skills in their subject.

We ensure that students develop the ability to communicate effectively and speak articulately in a range of contexts and for different purposes and audiences.   Structured speaking and listening activities are embedded in the taught curriculum, and opportunities to extend students' language and to hone their speaking and listening skills are provided through a diverse range of enrichment activities.

In order for every student to meet our challenging targets and high aspirations, our students must become highly proficient, fluent readers, able to read effectively and productively.   At Isaac Newton Academy we aim to systematically cultivate in our students the habit of reading, to develop students' confidence in reading, and to ensure that they acquire a love of reading that will last a lifetime. (See INA Reading Policy).

A consistent, school-wide approach is taken to develop students' skills in writing. There are shared expectations of students' writing in all subject areas, supported by a common Marking for Literacy policy. Students recognise and are expected to apply the skills learned in English to the knowledge and concepts they acquire in other subjects. Time is provided in each curriculum area for the practice and development of extended writing.

At Isaac Newton Academy every language is valued equally. We believe that, far from being a barrier to acquiring excellent communication skills, a student's ability to speak another language enhances their literacy skills and cognitive thinking. The teaching strategies outlined below support the literacy progress of all students, including EAL students, however teachers must be aware of, and plan carefully to meet, the specific needs of students at each stage of language acquisition.

Our curriculum provides depth to enable students to become proficient in literacy. Year 7 & 8 students study English for one hour each day. Additional English support in a 1:1 or small group setting is

provided at lunchtimes, after school and on Saturdays to students who are identified as requiring intensive literacy intervention to rapidly progress. All Year 7 & 8 students have a one hour reading lesson each week and the Library is seen as the heart of the school and a centre of learning.

Responsibilities of all classroom staff (teachers and LAs)

'All teachers should demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy and correct use of Standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject.'
The Teaching Standards (2011)

At INA it is an expectation that subject teaching addresses the language demands of that subject and that all teachers and LAs develop, apply and consolidate students' literacy skills in their subject.

All teachers and LAs:
- use speaking and listening opportunities to develop subject learning and independent thinking
- use active reading strategies to increase students' ability to read for a purpose, engage with and understand texts
- model and demonstrate the teaching of key text types in the subject
- identify and explore key terms and vocabulary to ensure that students recognise and understand them
- mark spelling, grammar and punctuation according to academy policy (see INA Marking for Literacy Policy)
- explicitly teach proof-reading and editing (SPG)
- reinforce expectations of fluent, clear, legible handwriting (See INA Presentation of Work Policy)

Strategies that promote and support literacy development

Speaking and Listening

- Using talk for students to rehearse and improve their ideas before committing them to paper, for instance, creating discussion opportunities around a key concept or idea
- Using pair and group discussion for oral rehearsal to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to actively engage with the topic
- Promoting active listening by reinforcing key listening strategies such as facing the person who is speaking and using eye contact
- Teaching students how to present their ideas effectively, for example how to deliver a presentation
- Teaching the rules and skills necessary for different types of speaking and listening, for instance how to construct an argument for a debate
- Expecting students to use full sentences when answering questions verbally in class by giving them the sentence stem if they fail to answer in a full sentence, for example:
  Teacher: 'How does the character feel?'
  Student: 'Enraged'
  Teacher: 'The character …'
  Student: 'The character feels enraged'

- Correcting basic errors in students' spoken English such as 'We was …'
- Encouraging students to speak audibly with a crisp, clear reminder such as 'Speak up, please' or 'Louder, please'
(See the Dialogue for Learning section of the INA Teaching and Learning Policy and Use of Standard English Policy)

Reading

- Building understanding of important reading techniques in a subject by modelling, for example how to skim, scan, analyse, read for pleasure
- Modelling strong reading and expressive emphasis
- Using active reading strategies such as paired and group talk about a text or use of graphic organisers
- Using rigorous and challenging questions to assess students' understanding of a text
- Teaching students effective research skills
(See INA Reading Policy)

Writing

- In lesson plans, identifying the form a written response will take, for example full sentence answers, report , essay or leaflet
- Making expectations about the purpose and form of written responses clear to students, for example the conventions of a formal letter or report, or the main features of writing to persuade or inform
- Building students' understanding of text types through teacher modelling, joint student construction of texts and independent writing
- Expecting students to use the correct subject specific vocabulary in their written responses
- Expecting students to write answers in full sentences, using the question stem where appropriate
- Providing planned opportunities for students to proof read and edit their writing
- Providing planned opportunities for extended writing

Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar

- Reinforcing the importance of accuracy in written language, for example, emphasising the need for correct sentence punctuation
- Identifying misspelt words and punctuation errors and ensure that students correct them, follow up recurring problems especially in the spelling of technical or subject specific vocabulary
- Identifying when it is important to use Standard English and when other registers or dialects may be used
- Giving time for students to digest and respond to marking at the start of lessons when books are handed back
(See Marking for Literacy Policy)

Key subject terminology

- Teaching key subject and technical vocabulary.
- Using classroom displays to reinforce key vocabulary
- Identifying any particular features of key vocabulary, for example, relate key words to similar words or the root from which they are derived and help students with strategies for remembering how to spell them or why they might be capitalised (e.g. 'Parliament' in history)

This policy should be read in conjunction with INA's Teaching and Learning policy, Marking for Literacy policy, Reading policy and Parental Engagement policy. Teachers should also refer to the attainment targets for English.

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